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The Letters of Simeon the Stylite.—By CHARLES C. TORREY, Professor in Andover Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass.

SAINT SIMEON of the Pillar has always been one of the extremely interesting figures in the history of the Oriental church, as he is certainly one of the most characteristic. We are fortunate, too, in possessing considerable detailed information as to his life and work, derived for the most part from contemporary sources. This information is not always, nor even generally, trustworthy, to be sure; but the portion which we can use with confidence is sufficient to give us a satisfactory idea of the course of his life, while even the portion which is least reliable as biography has its value for the church historian. As is well known, our chief sources for Simeon's biography are, *first*, the old Syriac *Life*, written in the year 473 A.D.[1] by Simeon, son of Apollonius, and Bar Ḥaṭṭār, son of ʾŪdān,[2] and published by S. E. Assemani in his *Acta Sanctorum Martyrum*, ii. 268 ff., and by Bedjan in his *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, iv. 507 ff.; and, *second*, the account of Simeon given by his contemporary, Theodoret of Cyrrhus (died 457), in his *Religious History*. The main facts of his life are these:[3] He was born in Ṣīṣ, a small town in the neighborhood of Nicopolis, in northern Syria, probably between the years 385 and 390. When about sixteen years of age, he entered a monastery near Antioch. Nine or ten years later, he repaired to Telneššē,[4] some fifty miles northeast of Antioch, where he remained, the most renowned ascetic in the East, until his death in the year 459. The last thirty-seven years of his life were spent on the top of pillars of increasing height; the one occupied

[1] See Appendix, page 275.

[2] Wright (*Syriac Literature*, p. 56, note 3) thought this might be a mistake for Uran (Uranius).

[3] See the excellent sketch in Nöldeke's *Orientalische Skizzen*, 1892, pp. 224-239.

[4] So generally written. The form ܬܠܢܫܝܠ also occurs; and the old manuscript Brit. Mus. Add. 14484, edited by Bedjan, has everywhere Telnešīl. In the letter to Jacob of Kaphra Rᵉḥīmā (below, p. 262), also from an old and excellent manuscript, the form is ܬܠܢܫܝܠ.

by him during the last thirty years being more than sixty feet high. After his death, his body was carried with great pomp to Antioch, and buried there; though Constantinople coveted the honor, and the Emperor Leo himself had planned to have the body brought to that city.

Of the few writings attributed to Simeon, only the *Letters* can lay any claim to genuineness. These—some of them very well known and often referred to—are found in different places; and, with a single exception, are concerned with the theological controversies which rent the Eastern church asunder in the middle of the fifth century. Three of these letters, found only in certain ancient manuscripts of the British Museum, have never been published, though attention has often been called to them, e. g., by Wright, *Syriac Literature*, p. 55, and by Nöldeke, *Orientalische Skizzen*, p. 239. It is the principal purpose of this article to edit and examine these three, with especial reference to the question of their genuineness; though as this purpose necessarily involves at least a partial comparison of the other letters, I have thought it best to bring them all together here.

One of the most celebrated of the letters which Simeon is said to have written is the one concerning the Jewish synagogues, addressed to the Emperor Theodosius II. (408–450 A.D.). At the time when Simeon was beginning to be famous, Jews and Christians were in bitter strife; and the latter having the power in their hands, the former were in danger of losing their rights as well as their property. Many synagogues, especially, were either burned, or seized and made to serve as Christian churches; and the efforts of the emperor to secure to the Jews their rights as citizens, and partially to restore the property stolen from them, were very displeasing to many of the warmer partisans of the church. The text of the letter is given in the *Life*. I reproduce it here from Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, i. 254, and add the variant readings of Bedjan's manuscript (*Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, iv. 637, line 11 ff.).

ܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪ ¹ ܠܗ ܠܐ ܬܗܘܐ ܠܟ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܥܠ ܦܢܝ ܝܬ ܠܝ ܒܝܬ ܟܢܫܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܢܝܬ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ ܒܝܬ ܨܠܘܬܐ ² ܐܘ ܒܝܬ ܡܕܪܫܐ ܕܢܨܪܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܗܪܣܬ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ ³ ܐܘ ܒܝܬ ܡܕܪܫܐ ⁴ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܨܠܡ ܐܘ ܨܠܡܐ ⁵ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܨܠܡ ܐܘ ܨܠܡܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܨܠܡ ܐܘ ܨܠܡܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܨܠܡ ܐܘ ܨܠܡܐ

¹ ܐܝܟ. ² ܨܠܡܐ. ³ Om. ⁴ ܕܐܝܬ. ⁵ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܨܠܡ.

ܗܘ ܕܫܘܬܦ ܗܘ ܘܚܒܪ ܘܚܒܪ ܠܝܗܘܕܝܐ ܕܟܦܪ ܘܠܐ ܕܝܕܥ ܗܘ ܕܒܦܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܟ ܕܫܩܪ ܥܠ ܫܩܪ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܘܗܫܐ ܕ

λων, ποτὲ δὲ τοὺς ἄρχοντας εἰς τὸν Θεοῦ ζῆλον ἐγείρων, κτλ.; where the connection of the clause "sending letters to the emperor about these things" with the preceding, "breaking down the presumption of the Jews," is beyond question, in view of the other narrative.[1] We can hardly doubt, therefore, that some such written communication was sent to Theodosius by the Stylite. Of the letter which we have, this at least may be said, that it is what we should expect a man like Simeon to write under such circumstances. As for the specific occasion, it is true, as Nöldeke points out, that the story told here of the order to restore the synagogues seems to be discredited by the witness of a document which has come down to us from that very controversy; namely, an edict of Theodosius addressed to Asclepiodotus, dated in the year 423, commanding that no more synagogues be seized or destroyed, and *that restitution be made for those of them which have already been consecrated to Christian use*;[2] the implication being that such could no longer be given back to their former owners. But there is abundant evidence that the emperor and his officers had no small difficulty with this matter of the synagogues, and that it had been the subject of lively dispute. See the *Codex Theodosianus*, xvi. 8, 9. 12. 20. 21; and notice that in this same year 423, between February and June, three successive edicts relating to the matter were promulgated (*ibid.*, 25. 26. 27). It is not unlikely that the monks and the local civil authorities were on opposite sides here (as, for example, Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. iv. p. 455, takes for granted); and it may be that what called out Simeon's letter was some proceeding on the part of Syrian officials based on the former less definite laws. In that case, the emperor's order to Asclepiodotus, referred to above, might well have been hailed by the monks as a victory for their party. Or, again, it is quite possible that when synagogues were seized *after* the promulgation of this edict of 423, and in violation of it, the attempt was made to punish the offenders by making them restore the buildings and pay damages, as narrated in our history. Of course the part played by Simeon in this matter was far less important than the popular report made it. The emperor's new edict was called forth by the same disturbances which stirred up the monk to write his letter; and it is not at

[1] So Assemani, *Bibl. Orient.*, i. 245.

[2] *Codex Theodosianus*, xvi. 8, 25 (ed. Haenel, 1837, col. 1604).

all likely that the prefect Asclepiodotus was dismissed in the way narrated by Simeon's biographers.

It is intrinsically probable that at this time and in this part of the world a letter to the emperor dictated[1] by such a well known saint as Simeon already was (even if we date the letter as early as 422 or 423) would have been copied and preserved long enough to have been used by biographers who wrote only a short time after his death. There is nothing, therefore, to decide against the supposition that we have before us the letter actually sent in Simeon's name to Theodosius; though the character of the source in which it stands, and our knowledge of the freedom with which even the best of early historians invented such documents to adorn their narrative, make skepticism justifiable.

The remaining letters ascribed to the Stylite are all concerned with the theological controversies of the fifth century.

The best known among these is the letter approving the council of Chalcedon, quoted in part by Evagrius (*Eccl. Hist.*, ii. 10), and afterward cited by other historians. The circumstances under which it was written are narrated as follows by Evagrius. The emperor Leo (I.) Thrax (reigned 457–474) sent out, soon after his accession to the throne, a circular letter[2] to the bishops of the empire and to a few of the most celebrated monks, requesting their judgment upon the council of Chalcedon. Simeon Stylites, who was the most noted of the monks addressed,[3] wrote to the emperor in reply, approving the council; and at the same time sent a letter of similar tenor to Basil, bishop of Antioch, who, it seems, had also written to ask for his judgment, perhaps with the added purpose of influencing him to send a favorable reply to the emperor. This letter to Basil is the one quoted by Evagrius, who hints that he had also at his disposal the letter of Simeon to

[1] As Nöldeke observes (*ibid.*, p. 233), it may be doubted whether Simeon could read and write.

[2] See Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*[3], ii. 377, note 1; and the account given by Zacharias Rhetor (Land, *Anecdota Syriaca*, iii. 138 f.).

[3] The others mentioned by name are Baradatus and one Jacob. Of the latter Evagrius merely says that he was a Syrian monk (like the other two); the *Codex Encyclius* calls him "Jacob, a monk of Nisibis" (so also Nicephorus Callistus, *Eccl. Hist.*, xv. 19); while Theophanes Confessor (ed. Classen, i. 173) calls him "Jacob Thaumaturgus." The monk intended is evidently the one lauded by Theodoret in his *Religious History*, chap. 21.

Leo, and would have included it in his history if it had not been too long. The letter ran thus (in the translation of the *Bohn Library*):

"To my lord, the most religious and holy servant of God, the archbishop Basil, the sinful and humble Simeon wishes health in the Lord. Well, may we now say, my lord, Blessed be God, who has not rejected our prayer, nor withdrawn his mercy from us sinners. For, on the receipt of the letters of your worthiness, I admired the zeal and piety of our sovereign, beloved of God, which he manifested and still manifests towards the holy fathers and their unshaken faith. And this gift is not from ourselves, as says the holy apostle, but from God, who through your prayers bestowed on him this readiness of mind." . . . . "On this account I also, though mean and worthless, the refuse of the monks, have conveyed to his majesty my judgment respecting the creed of the 630 holy fathers assembled at Chalcedon, firmly resolving to abide by the faith there revealed by the Holy Spirit; for if, in the midst of two or three who are gathered together in his name, the Saviour is present, how could it be otherwise than that the Holy Spirit should be throughout in the midst of so many and so distinguished holy fathers?" . . . . "Wherefore be stout and courageous in the cause of true piety, as was also Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, in behalf of the Children of Israel. I beg you to salute from me all the reverend clergy who are under your holiness, and the blessed and most faithful laity."

The evidence for the genuineness of this letter is in general much like that appealed to in the case of the preceding, but is considerably stronger. Evagrius has an excellent reputation for trustworthiness as a historian, and wrote in Antioch, where a letter dictated by this saint at the pinnacle of his fame (not more than two years before his death) would certainly have been preserved. There seems to be no reason to doubt that Leo wrote to Simeon on this occasion, as attested by Evagrius, the *Codex Encyclius*,[1] and many subsequent historians, and denied by none. And the testimony is uniform that all of those addressed by the emperor returned answers favorable to the council of Chalcedon, excepting only Timotheus of Alexandria and Amphilochius of Side. Note especially the testimony of the Monophysite historian Zacharias of Mytilene (Land, *Anecdota Syriaca*,

[1] In Harduin, *Acta Conciliorum*, vol. ii. (1714), p. 690 ff.

vol. iii. p. 142). The letter to Basil of Antioch has, therefore, strong indirect support; and it is yet more deserving of confidence because of its contents. It is a very uninteresting production, made up largely of commonplace phrases, which are drawn out at considerable length. The only plausible reason for inventing such a letter would have been the purpose to show that Simeon approved the council of Chalcedon; but it is sufficiently obvious that this colorless, almost indifferent utterance could never have been forged as a Chalcedonian party document.

There is another letter, said to have been written by Simeon at about this time, in which his adherence to the 'emperor's party' is attested. This is the letter from Simeon to Eudocia, the widow of Theodosius II., quoted by Cyril of Scythopolis (middle of the sixth century), in his *Vita Euthymii* (Cotelerius, *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta*, tom. ii. p. 271), and by Nicephorus Callistus, *Eccl. Hist.*, xv. 13. The latter tells the story as follows. The empress Pulcheria, having become reconciled to her beautiful sister-in-law (now removed to a safe distance), wished to see her become orthodox, and employed every possible influence to this end. Eudocia, half persuaded by the letters and entreaties she received, finally wrote to Simeon Stylites, asking his guidance and promising to follow it. The letter was sent by the chorepiscopus Anastasius. Simeon replied:

"Know, my child, that the devil, seeing the wealth of your virtues, sought to sift you as wheat; moreover, that corrupter Theodosius, having become the receptacle and instrument of the evil one,[1] both darkened and disturbed your God-beloved soul. But be of good courage, for your faith has not left you. I wonder, however, exceedingly at this, that having the fountain close at hand you do not recognize it, but hasten to draw the water from afar. You have near by the inspired Euthymius; follow his counsels and admonitions, and it will be well with you."[2]

Eudocia followed this advice, and was directed by Euthymius to hold to the doctrine of the four councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus (431); and Chalcedon.

Regarding this letter there is little to be said. It may well be genuine, though there is, of course, room for doubt. Even if it

[1] This clause seems to be a later improvement. It is not found in the older form of the letter.

[2] The *Vita Euthymii*, in which the story is told in much greater detail, gives the letter in almost the same words.

is a forgery for the glory of Euthymius, as is possible, it shows, at least, what views the Stylite was commonly believed to hold.[1]

But the question as to Simeon's theological position during the last years of his life—that is, at the time when the above-mentioned letters to Leo, Basil, and Eudocia, are supposed to have been written—is raised anew by the three hitherto unpublished letters of which mention has already been made. All three are decidedly controversial, and in them the Stylite speaks as a bitter opponent of the Chalcedonense.

The letters are found in two ancient Syriac manuscripts of the British Museum. One of these, Add. 12154 (no. DCCCLX. in Wright's *Catalogue*), dated by Wright at the end of the 8th or beginning of the 9th century, is a manuscript of miscellaneous contents, of which the first section is a collection of Monophysite party documents (fol. 1–18). The thirty-third section contains the three letters (*Catalogue*, vol. ii., p. 986), extending from fol. 199*b* to fol. 201*a*. The first of them is addressed to the Emperor Leo (I.); the second, to the abbot Jacob of Kaphrā Rᵉḥīmā; the third, to John, bishop of Antioch (died 442).

The second manuscript, Add. 12155 (no. DCCCLVII. in the *Catalogue*), is a large and beautifully written codex of the 8th century. It is a Monophysite compilation; and contains as its twenty-ninth section (fol. 229*a*; *Catalogue*, vol. ii. p. 951) the first of the three letters just mentioned, namely the one addressed to the Emperor Leo. There is prefixed to it a superscription occupying several lines; otherwise, the text corresponds closely to that of the other manuscript.

I give here the text of Add. 12154 (A), adding in the case of the letter to Leo the variant readings of Add. 12155 (B).

ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ (fol. 199*b*, near top)

ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈ ܕ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܦ̈

ܗܘ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܐܢܐ ܒܥܝ ܠܡܫܕܪ ܠܟ ܒܪ ܐܢܫ ܕܐܬ ܠܗ ܒܥܝ ܠܡܫܕܪ ܠܗ

*ܐܢܐ ܟܬܒ ܗܢܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܒܟܬܒ ܡܪܩܕ ܒܝܕ ܣܡܝܟ ܐܚܝ ܒܪ ܐܡܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܥܠ ܚܣܕ[1]
ܐܠܗܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܘܐܪܥܐ ܘܟܠ ܙܒܝܢ ܕܒܗ ܐܢܐ ܫܪܝ ܒܗ ܒܫܘܩ ܕܒܪ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ

ܐܪܚܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ ܘܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܪܚܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܪܚܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ. ܐܦ ܥ̈ ܐܝܟ ܐܫܬܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܪܚܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܪܚܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܕܡܨܪ̈ܝܢ. ܐܦ ܥ̈ ܐܝܟ ܐܫܬܐ

ܐܓܓܪܬ ܕܡܪ ܒܪ ܣܝܡܝܢ ܕܣܗܕ ܥܠ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܩܒܠ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬ ܩܠܩܝܕܘܢ.

ܩܕܡ ܕܩܒܠ ܐܢܐ ܠܦܬܓܡܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܟ ܝܩܝܪܐ ܒܪܫ ܫܡܥܬ ܚܕܝ ܒܬܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܪܩܝܢ. ܒܪܫ ܚܕܝ ܒܬܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܪܩܝܢ. ܩܕܡ ܕܩܒܠ ܐܢܐ ܠܦܬܓܡܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܟ ܝܩܝܪܐ ܒܪܫ ܫܡܥܬ

Second Letter: To Mar Jacob of Kaphrā Rᵉḫīmā.[1]

To our Spiritual Brother in Christ; adorned with graces illustrious and divine; zealous for the orthodox faith of the fathers, which we have learned from prophets, apostles, and saints; the Archimandrite, Mar Jacob of Kaphrā Rᵉḫīmā; from the mean and weak sinner, Simeon, who stands upon the pillar near the village Telnešī; great and exceeding peace in the Lord.

First of all, I beseech you to offer prayers to God for me, that He may give me strength and patience, on this stone upon which I stand; and I also make supplication to God for my sins.

As for the rest:[2] Since your Reverence has sent to me by Mar Thomas, your pupil, requesting that the anathema which I once uttered upon the council of Chalcedon be put in writing by me and sent to your Reverence; to be used for the consolation and confirmation of the orthodox everywhere, and for the stopping of the mouth of perverse heretics: This I say to you, my Beloved; that I have hope and confidence in God, whom I serve and worship; and I confess Him and believe in Him, whose truth you and I will keep unto the end. I have not approved, and will not approve, that council of perverse heretics which was convened at Chalcedon; nor the evil which was perpetrated by it, and the sinful and wicked deed which they did to the holy martyr Dioscurus.[3] But I have cursed, and will curse, that wicked council which was convened at Chalcedon; and every one who has approved or shall approve it, or who has been, or shall be, like minded with those who composed it; unless he has repented or shall repent. Moreover, a writing, signed by these calumniators,[4] bears witness for me that I did not approve them, nor did I write anything to that effect; nor can they prove that I ever gave them countenance in any way; nor will any one assert that I did, unless he wishes to destroy his soul by lying and slander. For verily I, the weak and sinful, am a partner with all

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[1] I do not know that this place has been identified.

[2] This formula ܗܕܐ ܥܠ ܕܡܛܠ ܕ corresponds exactly to the Arabic أمّا بعد and the Biblical Aramaic וּכְעֶנְיַן (only in Ezra). See *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1897, p. 166 ff. In the "Letter of Alexander of Hierapolis and Andreas of Samosata" (below, p. 271), the expression ܕܡܛܠ ܗܢܐ is used in precisely the same way, introducing the letter proper after the superscription.

[3] Died 454, three years after his deposition at Chalcedon.

[4] For the explanation of these words, see below, page 272.

those holy and saintly fathers, three hundred and eighteen in number, who assembled at Nicaea; and with the hundred and fifty who met at Constantinople; and with the two hundred and twenty who assembled together with the holy Cyril at Ephesus, and cursed and cast out the wicked Nestorius. Moreover, I have been and am a partner with the holy martyr Mar Dioscurus, Patriarch of the metropolis Alexandria; him who was unjustly and wickedly driven into exile, as though he were an evil doer, by perverse heretics, enemies of the truth; those who are like minded with the wicked Nestorius, and with Leo of Rome, and with the unrighteous Emperor Marcian.

As I have already said, the truth which I have learned from apostles and from holy fathers and saints, in this I abide unto the very end of my life; nor will I basely deny that work of grace which was wrought through the coming of God our Saviour in human nature; who came down and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was born of her in her virginity, and endured all that came upon him in order that he might redeem the life of all mankind.

If then, my Lord, there is any one who is of doubting mind, let him be confirmed in the faith of the holy fathers, and in these things which we have written. And do you be in good health, and rejoicing in spirit and body. Pray for me that I may be one of God's elect.

Third Letter, also written by Simeon himself: To John of Antioch, concerning Nestorius.

To the holy and God-loving Mar John, Bishop of Antioch, from Simeon the feeble in the Lord, greeting.

Having heard, my Lord, from faithful men that you have been summoned by the most pious emperor to attend the holy council, for which, on account of Nestorius and his blasphemies, he is striving to assemble the holy bishops at Ephesus; and that your Holiness, as is reported, does not wish to join their assembly: I in my insignificance urge your Holiness, not to delay to go up to the holy council of Ephesus, and to become an ally of our holy father Cyril, and a participant in the holy synod which is with him, in cursing the misguided Nestorius—if so be that he come not to repentance.

If this shall not be done by you, I know well that there will be no peace in the churches of the East; but that, on the contrary,

great disturbances will arise. Nay, surely it is for you to do this, which will please God, rejoice the king, and establish peace in the churches of the East.

As was remarked above, the manuscript Add. 12155, which contains only the letter to the Emperor Leo, prefixes to it a superscription several lines in length. This superscription, which is rubricated, reads as follows :[1]

ܐܓܓܪ]ܘ[ܥܠ ܡܪܝ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܕܥܡܘܕܐ ܕܐܬܝܗܒ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܠܡܠܟ ܠܐܘܓܣ ܕܡܠܟ ܒܬܪ ܡܪܩܝܢܘܣ]ܘ[ܕܒܬܪ ܗܢܐ ܕܐܬܓܠܝ ܥܠ]ܗ[ܬܐܘܕܘܪܛ]ܐ[ܩܘܪܗܝ]ܕ[ ]ܐ[ ]ܗ[ ]ܘ[

etics") that Simeon *did* accept the council of Chalcedon. We know, in fact, that this saint, whose dictum was of such great importance, was claimed not only by Monophysites and Chalcedonians, but also by Nestorians. In at least one of the three letters, moreover, the writer's main purpose is, professedly, to silence his calumniators. The letter addressed to the abbot Jacob of Kaphrā Rᵉḥīmā was intended (to use its own words) "to be used for the consolation and confirmation of the orthodox everywhere, and for the stopping of the mouth of perverse heretics." And a little further on, the writer implies that his Chalcedonian enemies have produced documents (which he brands as forgeries) in support of their assertion. "I did not approve [the council]," he says, "*nor did I write anything to that effect*, nor can they prove that I ever gave them countenance in any way; nor will any one assert that I did, unless he wishes to destroy his soul by lying and slander." That is, it is not a question of Simeon's *conversion* from Melkite to Monophysite views; he says here (or is made to say) most distinctly that he never at any time gave the hated 'synod' his support. If, then, this letter to Jacob is genuine, it follows that the letters above quoted or alluded to, preserved by Evagrius, Cyrillus Scythopolitanus, and the rest, are all forgeries.

But can Simeon have been the author of these Monophysite epistles? From all that we know of his surroundings and the influences to which he was subjected, we should expect to find him a Chalcedonian. He had passed all his life in the Antiochian district; a district in which sectional pride had been strong during the last decades of his life, while the 'Antiochian party' still held its ground and made its influence felt. It is true that as early as the middle of the fifth century the Syrian theology was losing its hold on the laity,[1] and we know that among the monks, especially, the Monophysite doctrines were more and more decidedly gaining the upper hand in this region, as in most other parts of the East. But the great Monophysite triumphs here came after Simeon's day; while he lived, war was waged in Syria quite as bitterly between Nestorians and men who held views like those of Ibas of Edessa, as between Monophysites and their opponents. What is much more important, Simeon was

[1] See Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die edessenische Chronik*, p. 76; and cf. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*,[3] ii. p. 367, bottom.

not a mere monk among monks, but was hand in glove with the Syrian leaders. Theodoret, the pillar of the Antiochians, was his friend. We know that Domnus II. of Antioch (patriarch, 442–449), a steady opponent of the Monophysites from the first,[1] was received by Simeon with especial favor on at least one occasion. See the story told in the *Life* (ed. Bedjan, p. 581), and repeated, in somewhat different form, by Evagrius, *Eccl. Hist.*, i. 13 (Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, i. 245 f.). The impression of the Stylite which we gain from the *Life* and from our other sources is that he was in full sympathy and coöperation with those who were the acknowledged leaders of the Syrian church. The council of Chalcedon reinstated Theodoret and Ibas, who, together with Domnus and others, had been deposed at Ephesus in the council of 449. This action may well have given the bishops and clergy of this region a strong added reason for accepting the Chalcedonense, as in fact they generally did.[2] It is natural to suppose that Simeon was of one mind with them in this.

The evidence afforded by the letters (whether genuine or not) given by Evagrius and the *Vita Euthymii* has already been noticed. Their testimony to Simeon's reputation as a Chalcedonian is weighty; that furnished by the story of Euthymius and the letter to Eudocia deserving, perhaps, especially to be emphasized.[3] And there is another noteworthy bit of evidence of a somewhat similar nature. In the *Edessene Chronicle*, lxix., the death of Simeon Stylites is recorded, as the event distinguishing the year 771 (A.D. 459).[4] This means, as Hallier remarks, that he is classed as a Chalcedonian. The compiler of the *Chronicle*, who is a Chalcedonian with an added Nestorian bias, writes with such strong party prejudice that he passes over the Monophysite saints and dignitaries in silence (Hallier, *Edess. Chron.*, p. 74 f.).

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[1] He appears to have been the first formally to impeach the orthodoxy of Eutyches.

[2] See the epistle of Nonnus of Edessa, written to the Emperor Leo, and signed by a number of the bishops of the region (Assemani, *Bibl. Or.*, i. 258).

[3] Cyril of Scythopolis was no ordinary biographer, but a zealous and trustworthy historian, careful of his statements and critical of his sources. For his Life of Euthymius, moreover, he had especially good material at his disposal.

[4] Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die edessenische Chronik*, p. 115 f.; Syriac text, p. 152.

In view of this array of testimony, direct and indirect, the presumption against the three Monophysite "Letters of Simeon the Stylite" is very strong. The argument from silence, moreover, adds its weight. These letters, if genuine, must have been very widely known. One was addressed to the emperor himself; another to the patriarch of Antioch, about to set out on his ill-fated journey to the first council at Ephesus; the third was expressly intended to be circulated as a campaign document, being the final dogmatic utterance of the great ascetic. But they are never mentioned, either by Monophysite historians or by others; nor does anybody outside of these two Syriac manuscripts seem ever to have heard of them.

In the letters themselves, there are not wanting indications which also tend to show that they are forgeries. With regard to the chronology presupposed in the first letter, this fact is perhaps worthy of notice: Simeon speaks of himself as having waited more than a reasonable time after receiving the emperor's letter (and returning his answer?), in hope that measures would be taken to undo what had been done at Chalcedon. But being disappointed in this hope, he finally wrote the present letter. Now Leo, who came to the throne in February, 457, probably sent out his circular letters in the year 458, but possibly even later.[1] In any case, the interval of time before Simeon's death (September, 459) would be very short—though perhaps not too short—for such a (second) reply as this from the saint.

In the second letter, the self-description in the address, "Simeon, who stands upon the pillar near the village Telnešī," is suspicious. It would hardly have occurred to the saint to describe himself in just this way, especially as he was the only Simeon Stylites in the world. But at a later day, when there had been other pillar-saints who bore the name Simeon, it would be necessary to mention the locality in order surely to identify the writer of this document.

The third letter is distinctly a *vaticinium ex eventu.* Whether or not John of Antioch was secretly a friend of Nestorius, and purposely managed to arrive late in Ephesus,[2] it is quite incredi-

[1] According to Theophanes Confessor (ed. Classen, i. 170, 172), Leo wrote the letters two years after his accession. Similarly Georgius Cedrenus (Migne, col. 662), "tertio anno."

[2] As, *e. g.*, Harnack is inclined to believe (*Dogmengeschichte,*[3] ii. 342, note 1). For the contrary view, see Neander's *History of the Church,* (trans. Torrey), ii. 528 f.

ble that any one, even in the city of Antioch, could thus have foretold the course which events would take, and the meeting of that "holy synod" which was to be held by Cyril and his monks.[1]

It is, of course, unnecessary to argue that the superscriptions prefixed to the letters in our two manuscripts belong to a later day than that of the Stylite. As for the part played by Theodoret in provoking the epistle to Leo, the death of this friend of Simeon's took place probably before the emperor sent out his circular letter, and certainly before this epistle could have been written.

Finally, most interesting evidence of the forgery is to be found in a *fourth* Syriac letter belonging to this same group. It is contained in both of the manuscripts, where it immediately follows the "Letter (or letters) of Simeon." I give, as before, the text of Add. 12154 with the variant readings of Add. 12155.[2]

ܠܥܡ ܐܝܟ ܕܚܕ[3] ܟܬܒܐ ܕܡܢ ܐܒܐ[4] ܕܐܢܛܝܟ ܠܬܐ[5] ܠܟܠ

ܕܡܫܬܐ[6] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[7] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܡܢ ܐܦܣܘܣ[8] ܕܡܢ ܐܦܣܘܣ[9]

ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[10] ܕܡܢ ܐܦܣܘܣ[11] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[12] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ✣ (fol. 201*b*)

ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[13] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ

ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[14] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ

ܕܐܦܣܘܣ[15] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ ܕܐܦܣܘܣ

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[1] There would be nothing strange, to be sure, in Simeon's writing to the patriarch John at this time, urging him to keep clear of Nestorius and his doctrines. We have a letter of Theodosius to the Stylite, written shortly before the convening of the council, in which the emperor beseeches him to use his influence with John of Antioch to this end (Harduin, *Acta Conciliorum*, i. 1685). It was, perhaps, with that letter in mind that this one was composed.

[2] This collated copy of the Syriac text was very kindly made for me, at my request, by the Rev. G. Margoliouth, of the British Museum.

[3] ܕܚܕ ?B ܕܚܕ. [4] ܐܒܐ ... ܐܢܛܝܟ, and add. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ.

[5] Add. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ. [6] Add. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ. [7] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ.

[8] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ, and om. ? in the next word. [9] Add. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ.

[10] Om. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ, reading ܕܐܦܣܘܣ. [11] Add. ܕܐܦܣܘܣ. [12] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ.

[13] See note on ܕܐܦܣܘܣ; above, p. 265. [14] ܕܐܦܣܘܣ.

[15] This verbal adjective, "distressing," should be added to the Syriac lexicons, none of which contain it, so far as I have seen.

ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܐܟ[1] ܕܐܠܟܣܢܕܪܘܣ ܡܒܘܓ ܘܐܢܕܪܐܘܣ ܕܫܡܣܛ[2] ܠܝܘܚܢܢ ܕܐܢܛܝܟ ܘܬܐܘܕܘܪܛ ܕܩܘܪ
ܗܘ ܒܥܠ ܚܝܐ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܝܥܩܘܒ ܕܟܦܪ ܪ̈ܗܝܡܐ ܗܘ ܕܟܬܒ ܠܗܘܢ ܐܓܪ̈ܬܐ ܩܕ̈ܝܫ̈ܬܐ
ܕܐܬܩܒܠ ܠܢ ܫܓܝ̈ܐ ܒܚܕܘܬܐ ܣܓܝ̈ܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܡܠ̈ܝ ܒܫܠ̈ܡ ܥܠ ܫܠܡ̈ܐ ܕܢܦ̈ܫ̈ܝܟܘܢ
ܐܠܗ̈ܝ̈ܐ ܘܚܒ̈ܝ̈ܒ̈ܐ ܠܢ ܐܦ ܥܠ ܫܠܡ̈ܐ ܕܦ̈ܓ̈ܪ̈ܝܟܘܢ ܕܐܬܝ̈ܕ̈ܥ ܠܢ ܡܢ ܐܓܪ̈ܬܐ
ܕܟܬ̈ܒ̈ܬ ܠܗ̈ܘ ܥܠ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܝܥܩܘܒ ܕܟܬ̈ܒ̈ܘ ܠܟ̈ܘܢ ܐܠ̈ܐ ܕܝ̈ܠ̈ܢ ܐܢ̈ܚ̈ܢ ܠܟ̈ܘܢ
ܡܫ̈ܬ̈ܕ̈ܥ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܐ̈ܢ̈ܚ̈ܢ ܠܡ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܩ̈ܕ̈ܫ̈ܝ̈ܟ̈ܘܢ ܕܐ̈ܦ ܐ̈ܢ ܚ̈ܙ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܠ̈ܗ̈ܘ ܕ̈ܡ̈ܩ̈ܝ̈ܡ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܡ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ
ܠ̈ܚ̈ܝ̈ܐ ܠ̈ܐ ܬ̈ܣ̈ܡ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܗ̈ܝ̈ܡ̈ܢ̈ܘ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܒ̈ܗ̈ܘ̈ܢ ܐ̈ܠ̈ܐ ܡ̈ܢ̈ܬ̈ܚ̈ܫ̈ܒ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܠ̈ܗ̈ܘ ܐ̈ܝ̈ܟ̈ ܫ̈ܐ̈ܪ̈ ܥ̈ܡ̈ܡ̈ܐ
ܗ̈ܪ̈ܛ̈ܝ̈ܩ̈ܐ ܐ̈ܡ̈ܪ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܐ̈ܢ̈ܚ̈ܢ ܠ̈ܟ̈ܘ̈ܢ ܡ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܩ̈ܕ̈ܫ̈ܝ̈ܟ̈ܘܢ ܕ̈ܡ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܫ̈ܡ̈ܥ̈ܘ̈ܢ ܘ̈ܝ̈ܥ̈ܩ̈ܘ̈ܒ̈ ܐ̈ܬ̈ܝ̈ܢ
ܠ̈ܡ̈ܫ̈ܐ̈ܠ̈ܘ̈ܬ̈ܟ̈ ܥ̈ܠ̈ ܡ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܫ̈ܡ̈ܥ̈ܘ̈ܢ ܘ̈ܝ̈ܥ̈ܩ̈ܘ̈ܒ̈ ܕ̈ܟ̈ܬ̈ܒ̈ܘ̈ ܠ̈ܗ̈ܘ̈ ܠ̈ܟ̈ ܐ̈ܡ̈ܪ̈ ܐ̈ܢ̈ ܐ̈ܢ̈ ܐ̈ܦ̈ ܚ̈ܙ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܐ̈ܢ̈ ܠ̈ܗ̈ܘ̈ ܕ̈ܡ̈ܩ̈ܝ̈ܡ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܡ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܠ̈ܚ̈ܝ̈ܐ

"things which Simeon and Jacob wrote" to John and Theodoret. Thus there is secured the written testimony of four of the foremost anti-Monophysites of this region that Simeon Stylites spurned their doctrines, and was in turn rejected from their fellowship.

We have, then, in these four Syriac letters, an interesting example of that forgery of documents which often played such an important part in the fierce controversies of the fifth and following centuries.[1] The temptation to this misuse of Simeon's name was especially strong; though it was a thing that could not easily be done until after his generation had passed away. He had written no books (if, indeed, he could read and write at all), and therefore a forgery in his name would be the less easily exposed.[2] His support was no small prize to be gained, for he was looked up to as an inspired man, gifted with superhuman knowledge and power. Even the most sober-minded and best educated of those who knew him personally—such as Theodoret, for example—believed him to be a constant worker of miracles. His fame continued unabated after his death;[3] and it is not surprising that some time after, perhaps in the following century, when the bone and sinew of Christian Syria was already Monophysite, and the strife with "Synodites" was still incredibly bitter, some less scrupulous controversialist should have dared to invent these oracles of the great saint.

It is probable that we have the forged documents complete in manuscript A. They seem to be the work of a single writer, and it is hardly likely that the collection ever contained any others. The scribe of the manuscript B (or of one of its ancestors), as is evident, chose to save himself time and trouble by omitting the two longest of the letters; copying only the first, with its secondary superscription, and the fourth.

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[1] "Das Fälschen von Acten war im 5.—7. Jahrhundert eine wichtige Waffe zur Vertheidigung des Heiligen" (Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*,[3] ii. 371, note 4).

[2] The silence of the *Life* on Simeon's doctrinal views (due perhaps to the fact that its authors did not fully sympathize with him in this regard) would also have assisted materially.

[3] Evagrius (i. 13) narrates how he once was permitted to see the body of the great Stylite; which, it seems, was not quite safe from relic-hunters. The face was well preserved, he writes, "excepting such of his teeth as had been violently removed by faithful men."

Appendix.

A few words regarding the principal manuscripts of the Syriac *Life of Simeon* may not be out of place, in view of the many conflicting statements which are current. The three best known manuscripts are the *Codex Vaticanus clx.*, and two codices of the British Museum, namely Add. 12174, and Add. 14484. The colophon of the Vatican codex reads as follows (I copy the text from Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, iv. p. 648 f.):

ܫܢܬ ܐܠܦ ܘܫܬ ܡܐܐ ܒܫܢܬ ܚܡܫ ܥܣܪ ܠܝܘܢܐ ܒܐܬܪ ܕܐܬܩܛܠ ܡܪܝ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܒܪ ܐܦܠܘܢ ܘܒܪ ܚܛܝܪ ܒܪ ܐܘܕܢ ܒܫܠܡ ܐܬܟܬܒ ܗܢܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܫܡܥܘܢ ܒܪ ܐܦܠܘܢ ܘܒܪ ܚܛܝܪ ܒܪ ܐܘܕܢ ... ܒܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܕܐܢܛܝܘܟܝܐ ... ...

sense of "compose" (a book or other writing).[1] He might have added that the word could hardly bear any other interpretation here, inasmuch as the colophon says, after giving the names of these two, "who took the pains to 'make' this book": "for they 'made' it by the labor of their hands and the sweat of their faces." It follows, that 473 A.D. was the date of the completion of the original work. The scribe of the Vatican manuscript simply reproduced, as usual, the colophon of an older codex; just when he made his copy, we do not know.[2]

The three manuscripts named present somewhat differing recensions of the work, as is of course to be expected in the case of a popular book of this kind. No serious attempt has as yet been made to determine which of these recensions stands nearest to the original. It is generally taken for granted that the Vatican codex is the oldest, and that its version of the history, which is considerably shorter than either of the others, is to be preferred. So, for example, Nöldeke, *Syrische Grammatik*,[2] p. xiii.: "der Vaticanische Text ist übrigens, wie es scheint, im Ganzen ursprünglicher als der des British Museum." But both of these current opinions deserve to be challenged; and in the case of the latter, it seems possible to prove to the contrary, in one important point at least. Bedjan, who printed the text of the London manuscript Add. 14484, dated by Wright in the sixth century, gives in his preface (p. xii. f.) a list of the numerous passages, some of them of considerable length, which are found in the London manuscript (or manuscripts), but are missing in the Vatican codex. An examination of these passages seems to make it plain that the longer recension, represented by the London codices, is to be preferred to the other. A single illustration will suffice. In Bedjan's text, p. 525 f., where the story of Simeon's first entrance into Telnešše is told, we have a smooth and consistent account, in the well-known style of this book. But no one can read the Vatican recension here, comparing it with the other, without seeing at once that it is the result of a mere mutilation of the original. A passage a dozen lines long has been cut out

[1] See the numerous examples in Payne-Smith.

[2] It may be that we have his words in the last section of the colophon, where, after the two authors of the work have made their request for the prayers of the reader, the scribe adds his own request.

bodily; regarding this fact there is no room for doubt. That is, the Roman codex contains a "clipped" version of the *Life;* in which the scribe has abridged from his original in the favorite way, by leaving out here and there passages of varying length.

It is likely that the oldest of our manuscripts stand at several removes from the original, and certain that the text of each has suffered from accidental corruption—aside from the alterations in matter and order. In view of the age of this biography, and the interest attaching to it, some further comparison of the several recensions might be worth while.